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ABSTRACT

This report answers questions that parents are likely to ask about preschool reading instruction. It discusses the origins, curriculum change, new concepts of intelligence and the various teaching methods such as Montessori and the British Infant School. Unlike previous generations, today's child is exposed to visual and auditory stimulation, and to forces converging simultaneously on the preschool curriculum. Events in technology, social and political changes, have exerted tremendous influence on revamping preschool educational programs. A checklist to determine whether or not the home provides for the development of early reading is offered, along with a Selected Book List for children of various ages. The need for emotional development and language skills is reviewed, good experiential backgrounds on which to base language, and an interest in reading. Although the learning of reading is highly individualized, it appears that preschool children can learn to read earlier. The parent is warned, however, that worry about a child's inability to learn to read may handicap a child, and in that case instruction is best left to the school. Trust, encouragement and interest are suggested. (For related documents, see PS 005 928 - 929.) (RG)

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VOLUME III OF III

PRESCHOOL READING INSTRUCTION: A LITERATURE SEARCH, EVALUATION, AND INTERPRETATION

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Bloomington, Indiana
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VOLUME III

PRESCHOOL READING INSTRUCTION: INFORMATION FOR THE PARENT

CHAPTER 1

PRESCHOOL READING INSTRUCTION: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Reading, for the child, is probably the most important experience in his life. Parents realize the importance of reading in school achievement and adult life.

Recently, many articles in popular magazines have stressed the importance of learning to read at a very early age. These articles reveal to parents the fact many kindergartens and pre-primary units of public schools offer preschool reading instruction. These publications also point out to parents that there are certain conditions and activities that foster the development of reading readiness and early reading skill. Therefore, it is natural for parents to ask such questions as:

1. What are the origins of preschool reading instruction?

2. When should I allow my child to be exposed to formal reading instruction?

3. How effective are kindergarten experiences on reading readiness and later reading achievement?

4. How effective is formal preschool reading instruction?

5. Will formal preschool reading instruction harm my child?

6. Can parents help schools that have preschool reading programs?

7. What kinds of homes produce good readers?

8. How can I help my preschool child before he learns to read?

9. What books should a preschool child read?

The purpose of this paper is to provide parents with information on the above questions. Along with the information, we will discuss activities and books suitable for parents to use with their preschool child.

What are the Origins of Preschool Reading Instruction?

During the past decade, parents of preschool children have been introduced to the idea of placing greater emphasis on the preschool curriculum. One of the central issues concerned with this new idea has been the question of preschool reading instruction. While school administrators and teachers wrestle with the philosophy, opinion, and logistics concerned with whether and how to implement the preschool reading program, parents are anxious to know more about the topic. Some parents are aware that educators are divided in their opinions about preschool reading, and they are anxious to know why. In other words, some parents have already taken a position for or against preschool reading instruction. Others are still seeking information before they make their decisions.

What follows is a discussion of the forces that have perpetuated current views toward and changes in the preschool curriculum. There should be information here that is of

value to all parents.

Curriculum Change. Prior to 1956, the acceleration of academic achievement was not considered to be the goal of the preschool educational curriculum, although there were parents who wanted their children exposed to formal education early. The launching of Sputnik by the U.S.S.R., however, caused a near phobic reaction about making American intellect equal, if not superior, to its challengers in the race for space. Thus, the launching of Sputnik provided the impetus for the reappraisal of the American educational curriculum. Of major concern here, however, is the fact that the educational curriculum was not merely updated. New programs in the sciences were based on Bruner's contention that the schools of America were wasting precious time in postponing children to the content of many subject areas on the grounds that it was too difficult. Consequently, curriculum committees began to develop K-12 curriculum sequences instead of simply reappraising the curriculum.

Closely related to the above event is the idea that technological advancement is moving ahead at such a rapid rate that man's intellect in the next generation may not be able to cope with it. In short, man is in great danger of destroying himself with the technology he has created. Man must increase his intellectual abilities or be enslaved and annihilated by his own technological inventions.

More practically speaking, we are producing harvesting equipment faster than we are growing produce. We are producing a labor force for work which will never be performed by a hand operated tool. Thus, the economy of future generations is threatened. If there is an excess of unskilled labor, where will be tax monies to furnish the unemployment with the basic necessities of life come from? Certainly not the workers or the producers, unless we prepare them now. In other words, there is clear and eminent danger. The handwriting is on the wall: Provide the soon-to-be unemployed, unskilled labor force with the potential for higher intellectual performance. Then, a would be dependent population will be able to sustain itself and contribute to the welfare of society, not only through the payment of taxes but with an awareness of how our society functions.

This is also an appropriate place to point out that the need to raise man's intellectual performance is not limited to the "average" man. In the highly competitive word of "future shock," the genius must perform at a greater level than the genius of today. This is most true if the nation is to hold its threatened status in the race for space, science, and technology.

To further underline the above discussion, we might also add that education is but one of the many professions recognizing the impending crisis. For example, physicians are researching the possibilities of using drug therapy to

increase intellectual performance. Surgeons are designing and researching operations to erase impairments affecting intellectual performance. Last, geneticists are beginning to uncover the understand human characteristics before conception. Thus, man's intellectual ability may be increased before he is conceived.

The events and ideas mentioned above all but destroyed earlier concepts of the traditional preschool curriculum. As new preschool programs emerged, they reflected the theory espoused by Bruner (1960) that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development." In the case of reading, since most preschool children were being exposed to signs, television advertisements, labels on food containers, magazines and books, and a variety of travel, it did not seem unreasonable to expose them to reading early.

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Newer Concepts of Intelligence. It is rather doubtful that the launching of Sputnik or the technological revolution would have had any long lasting effect on the preschool curriculum had not other developments provided a rationale to question earlier practices. The next major influence on preschool education was the realization among educators that intelligence was not fixed or predetermined but instead depended on the early experiences of young children.

One of the more widely quoted sources concerned with the role of experience in intellectual development is J. McV. Hunt's Intelligence and Experience. Hunt (1961), after an exhaustive review of the literature, reversed the belief that one can wait for intellectual development to take place. According to Hunt, the role of experience in intellectual development is so powerful that it not only has a direct influence upon what development takes place, but also when that development occurs. Similarly, Bloom (1964) underlines the importance of the early years, particularly the environment in intellectual development. In his powerfully documented book, Stability and Change in Human Characteristics, he concluded that the period before four years of age was the time of greatest intellectual growth. Bloom estimated that approximately 50 percent of a person's intellectual development was completed by age four and another 30 percent by age eight. Thus, the writings of Hunt and Bloom were used as evidence to support the planning of structured environments to enhance the intellectual development of the preschool child, particularly academically oriented preschool programs designed to teach reading, writing and arithmetic.

The Discovery of Piaget. Prior to the 1960's, Piaget, an eminent Swiss psychologist, had been studying the processes underlying the development of intelligence. His work was relatively unknown to American psychologists due to the lack of translations. Beginning with the 60's, however, translations of his work began to appear in the psychological and

educational literature.

Briefly, Piaget views the child as a naturally active organism whose intellect is shaped by his interaction with the environment. As a result of interactions with his environment and physiological maturation, sensorimotor operations evolve into more complex mental operations that are tied to language. Needless to say, the work of Piaget influenced American psychologists and educators. More important, his concepts found their way into the early education curriculum.

Social and Political Forces. Another important force exerting pressure on curriculum change at the preschool level has been the public awareness of the relationship among poverty, intellectual development, and academic achievement. A major contribution here was Deutsch's (1963) analysis of environmental influences on the school achievement of disadvantaged children. Disadvantaged environments, he found, made academic success almost impossible. Children reared in poverty had few opportunities to develop language skills, visual and auditory discrimination skills or to manipulate visual properties. Moreover, they entered school with learning styles that differed from those of their more advantaged counterparts. In other words, their environments had inadequately prepared them for school experiences. Deutsch called for a new preschool curriculum based on the assumption that early intervention by well-structured

programs would reduce the influence of the disadvantaged child's environment. The research of Smith (1963), Shipman (1965), and Hess (1968) also provided a decided impetus to the belief that the intervention of structured preschool programs should begin early if the attenuating influence of the disadvantaged child's environment was to be overcome.

The above research, coupled with the realization that an affluent American society could not allow the inequities of environmental circumstances to prevent young children from developing to their fullest potential. led the federal government to promote legislation focused on preschool education. Head Start, established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, represents the federal government's most popular program on the War on Poverty.

The Head Start program was a significant piece of legislation for two reasons: First, it made direct federal government involvement possible at an age level earlier than any time before in America's history. Second, it forced recognition of the fact that children of the poor entered school seriously deficient of the abilities and experiences necessary to profit from education (Orton, 1967). It is also important to note that Head Start funding for FY 1971 reached an all time high of $360 million. Thus a number of exemplary preschool Head Start programs, some of which provide early

reading instruction, are funded by the federal government. These programs now involve over 480,000 children with an average expenditure of $1,050.

The documented success of federally funded Head Start programs, aimed primarily at providing the disadvantaged youngster with the basic skills necessary for successful academic achievement, has led the more advantaged families to demand the same opportunities for their children. As a result, the number of preschools is increasing and business organizations are franchising preschools. Unfortunately, approximately three fifths of the nation's population have incomes too high to make them eligible for Head Start and yet cannot afford the tuitions of private preschools. To say the least, this group is disenchanted with the increasing amount of tax dollars directed toward the disadvantaged preschool child. They are demanding public preschool education for their own children.

In addition to the Head Start legislation, the federal government has offered incentives to industry to enter the early childhood field. An amendment to the Labor-Management Relations Act of 1969 allows industry to establish funds for preschool centers for children of employees. As a result, a number of firms have already established preschool centers. A number of these centers expose children to early reading instruction.

Other evidence also attests to the fact that the federal government has exerted a strong influence on the preschool curriculum. In establishing priorities for its research and development program in education, the National Center for Educational Research and Development listed reading and early childhood among the top five priority areas for the five year period FY 1972 - FY 1976. To be more specific, over 50 percent of a $226 million dollar budget has been earmarked for research and development on learning to read and the education of children three to eight years old.

Through federal support and special projects, the body of research on preschool education has increased considerably. In 1967 the National Laboratory for Early Childhood Education, a network of seven centers located on university campuses, was established. Moreover, early educational programs are the focus of at least six of the federally funded Regional Education Laboratories.

Federal funds have also played a key role in the authorization of information on preschool education. The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is an information network whose objectives are to collect, store, index, analyze, interpret, and disseminate information on educational research and development. ERIC includes a clearinghouse on reading (ERIC/CRIER) at Indiana University at Bloomington, Indiana whose focus is on reading and a clearinghouse at the University of Illinois at Urbana, Illinois whose focus is on

early childhood. In sum, federal legislation has played an integrated role in the recent interest in early childhood education and reading.

The Montessori Method. The Montessori Method stems from the early work of Maria Montessori, an Italian educator. In 1906, Montessori was asked to direct a preschool program in the slums of Rome. It was at that time that she developed her teaching methods, based on the belief that the years three to six were the time periods in which young children formed both habits and based for learning. Instruction in Montessori's classrooms was centered around structured materials such as blocks, beads, chains, rods of wood, and cubes of different textures to develop visual perception and visual motor integration. Although her method was widely acclaimed, interest in it eventually died.

There was a sudden rebirth of interest in the Montessori Method during the early 1960's. The immediate cause of the revival can be traced to the work of Nancy Rambusch (1962), who studied the Montessori Method in Europe. Rambusch returned to America to organize the American Montessori Society and to found the Whitby School located at Greenwich, Connecticut. The Whitby School, like most Montessori Schools, offers a curriculum which includes reading, writing and arithmetic. In short, these events acquainted a whole new generation of parents to the Montessori Method.

British Infant School. In 1964 the British Infant School embarked on a new curriculum which offered and encouraged reading instruction at an early age. According to Villet (1969), the British developed a school atmosphere which was heavily influenced by the Montessori technique.

Children in the British Infant School do not receive reading instruction with preprinted reading materials but rather each child monitors his own progress in homemade books. Along with the assistance of the teacher, the child simply determines what he desires to learn on a given day. Later, the youngster extends and incorporates his goals to reading instruction in the form of experience stories by working through the following stages: (1) drawing a picture, (2) having an adult write down a dictated story about the picture, (3) copying the story, (4) memorizing the sound and looks of the story, and (5) reading the story to others. As greater interest in reading is developed, the child is encouraged to attempt to read books meeting his interests. At this point, the child begins to receive instruction in sight words and phonics.

Omar K. Moore. Early reading was also popularized by the research of Omar K. Moore with the "talking typewriter." According to Pines (1963), Moore contends that the ages between two and six are the most creative and active. He developed a "talking typewriter" to teach young children to

read. Instruction with Moore's "talking typewriter" begins by introducing children to letters and their sounds. Eventually, the program proceeds to words, then to sentences and paragraphs, and finally stories. Of special interest, is the fact that Moore demonstrated that very young children were able to teach themselves to read with the help of educational technology.

Studies of Early Readers. In 1958, Dr. Dolores Durkin (1966) of the University of Illinois conducted two longitudinal studies of children who had learned to read prior to entering first grade. The results of her research led Durkin to conclude that: (1) preschool children are able to learn to read prior to entering first grade, (2) IQ is not a significant factor in preschool children's early acquisition of reading skill, (3) children who learn to read early continue to read and achieve at a higher level than their counterparts who do not learn to read early, and (4) that early reading is a pronounced advantage for children with low IQ's. In short, children who learn to read early seem to maintain their headstart. As might be expected Dr. Durkin's findings have had a considerable influence upon current views torward preschool reading instruction.

The Denver Project. Although early reading instruction had captured the imagination of educators earlier, it was not until 1960 that a major public school system concerned itself with the problem on a large scale basis. Undoubtedly,

the most widely advertised project was the one conducted in Denver, Colorado under the direction of Joseph Brzeinski and funded by the U.S. Office of Education. This project was a longitudinal project involving over 4,000 children for a period of five years. Children in control groups followed a regular kindergarten program, and experimental children received formal reading instruction. The findings of the study revealed that: (1) reading skills can be taught effectively to kindergarten children, (2) gains in reading as the result of early reading instruction are maintained, and (3) that apparently early reading instruction does not have an adverse effect on vision, social and emotional adjustment, or the desire to read.

Educational Television. Unlike previous generations, the child of today is exposed to visual and auditory stimulation and information by the mass media. As a result the young child's gradual movement along the learning continuum is no longer restricted to the public schools. As a matter of fact, television has taken a giant step in the direction of introducing beginning reading to young children in their homes.

The Children's Television Workshop represents a carefully planned effort to apply the entertainment values and production techniques of commercial television to an innovative preschool curriculum. Featuring a format of fast action and entertainment, the producers of Sesame Street base their objectives upon the educational needs of disadvantaged pre-

school children. Consequently, the program exposes preschool children to instruction in language development, reading, and arithmetic.

To summarize, it seems fair to say that the current emphasis on preschool reading instruction is the result of a number of forces converging simultaneously on the preschool curriculum. First, events in technology and curriculum change, along with social and political forces and changes in the concept of intelligence have exerted a tremendous influence on revamping the preschool educational curriculum. Second, the rediscovery of Piaget and Montessori has had a lasting effect on the preschool curriculum. Third, reviews, reports, and research related to preschool reading instruction have received national acclaim in educational journals and popular magazines. Last, television has taken a plunge into introducing reading to preschool children. These, then, are the forces underlying the current popularity of issues related to preschool reading instruction.

When Should I Allow My Child to be Exposed to Formal Reading Instruction?

The question of when to expose the child to formal reading instruction has been debated by educators since the turn of the century. As a result, one might think that an answer to the question is readily available. Unfortunately, educators are not in agreement among themselves as to when a

child should be exposed to formal reading instruction.

One will find that one group of educators argues that the child must develop readiness for reading before he is exposed to formal reading instruction. According to this group the child gradually matures as he develops through a series of stages which "ripen" his physical and neural development. These educators believe in delaying reading instruction until first grade.

Closely related to the above idea of readiness is the belief that readiness for reading is related to the child's social and emotional development. The idea here is that readiness is comprised of factors such as responsiveness to the rights of others, self-assurance, self-control, receptiveness to new ideas, and good feelings about oneself. Educators viewing readiness from this perspective also believe reading instruction should be postponed until first grade. It should be pointed out, however, that they would not be opposed to informal readiness instruction designed to enhance the child's development in the important areas mentioned. This group would emphasize readiness through field trips to increase vocabulary. Auditory and visual discrimination exercises would also be emphasized. As might be expected, they would also attempt to develop interest in reading by having children listen to good stories and look at good picture books.

In contrast to the above views, many educators feel that the preschool child is ready to learn to read. They

hold this belief for a number of reasons. First, they contend that children of today have better experiential backgrounds than their counterparts of a decade ago. Second, they maintain that today's children come from better homes. Consequently, many of them have traveled widely and been exposed to many activities which make them ready for reading instruction. Third, it is argued that many children actually learn to read through television viewing, exposure to labels in stores and on highway signs, and instruction from brothers and sisters. Finally, they contend that many parents teach their children to read before first grade.

All of the groups mentioned above present acceptable arguments for their position. And all the groups are probably correct. Certainly, many children are not ready to learn to read before first grade. On the other hand many preschool children are ready. In fact, it is difficult to keep some children from learning to read prior to first grade.

The obvious answer to the question is that preschool children who express an interest in learning to read should be taught to read. The parent should understand, however, that merely placing a child in a preschool that teaches reading does not necessarily mean that the child will learn to read. He may not be interested. If he is not interested, he will not learn to read. More important, if he is not interested he should not be pushed. Such action might result in later learning and emotional problems. Similarly, the

child may learn to dislike or fear school.

In summary then, when the child is ready for reading instruction he will let the parent know by revealing an interest in reading. Until such time, the child should not be exposed to formal reading instruction.

How Effective Are Kindergarten Experiences on Reading Readiness and Later Reading Achievement?

Many parents feel that the kindergarten experience is simply a replication of the child's home experience. Consequently, they question whether they should send their children to kindergarten, particularly for experiences designed to increase reading readiness and later reading ability.

One stated goal of kindergarten programs is to promote achievement in first grade reading by providing readiness training in kindergarten. This training usually consists of teaching children to identify symbols, numbers, letters, and to discriminate among both visual and aural representations of them. Often, kindergarten programs also include perceptual motor exercises to train eye-hand coordination and left to right vision.

Readiness instruction is common in kindergarten and may consist of formal or informal experiences. Sometimes no particular efforts for readiness instruction are outlined by school personnel. It is simply assumed that general kindergarten experiences are readiness experiences.

Research studies have been done to determine whether kindergarten experiences do, in fact, improve readiness for reading. In general, these studies have indicated that children who attend kindergarten are more likely to experience success in first grade reading than are children who do not. Children with kindergarten experiences score consistently higher on reading readiness and reading achievement tests, catch on to reading instruction more quickly, and exhibit greater initial reading ability than do children who begin school in first grade.

Apparently, then, kindergarten is valuable even when no attempt is made to teach formal readiness exercises. The kinds of activities common to kindergarten programs do help prepare children for first grade. However, this should not be taken as undisputed approval of all kindergarten activity. There are a few research studies whose results suggest that kindergarten experiences make little difference in reading readiness and reading achievement in grade one or throughout the elementary grades. More than anything else, this sprinkling of negative results suggests that perhaps there are more and less valuable aspects of kindergarten programs. For example, many kindergartens offer informal reading readiness experiences. Others offer formal readiness experiences. Thus, parents might investigate the kind of readiness program a particular kindergarten offers children.

As indicated above, there are many aspects of successful kindergarten programs; however, these aspects are difficult to pinpoint. For one thing, reading readiness programs designed for kindergarten vary greatly in style, emphasis, and instructional formality. Informal readiness programs provide readiness experiences for children as children make their needs known. No formal and systematic effort is made to provide reading readiness instruction.

On the other hand, some kindergartens provide formal reading readiness instruction. Formal reading readiness instruction is characterized by carefully prescribed sequences of exercises for children and by equally carefully described goals and teaching methods. Content of formal readiness programs usually includes exercises to teach children to: (1) discriminate shapes, letters of the alphabet, and sounds, (2) learn the names of the letters of the alphabet, (3) learn the sounds of the letters of the alphabet, (4) learn to use eyes in a left-to-right sequence, (5) relate words to pictures, and (6) to learn a few sight words. We might point out that informal readiness instruction is concerned with the same learnings. Thus, the only difference between informal and formal readiness instruction is that formal readiness represents a carefully planned curriculum of teacher-planned activities which the child is exposed to in a sequential manner.

Approaches to formal reading readiness instruction vary greatly. There are language experience approaches which

relate instruction to children's language development and experiences, basal reader approaches which use materials similar to those used in first grade, and workbook approaches which isolate requisite prereading skills and provide sequential instruction in them. Once again, informal readiness programs may be concerned with the same kinds of skills as are formal readiness programs. In general, however, informal programs are less tied to sets of materials or to teachers manuals.

Research into the effectiveness of formal and informal programs of reading readiness presents a number of interesting findings. For one thing, the carefully planned, systematic, and sequential readiness programs appear to be more effective than those in which all readiness instruction is incidental. This is hardly surprising, since it seems quite reasonable to suggest that any planned endeavor is more likely to be successful than is one which was attempted haphazardly.

Readiness programs, whether formal or informal, which emphasized the language development and experiences of children appear to be more successful than those which use pre-basal reader materials. This is not surprising in light of the fact that research in the area of language development in children points to the late preschool years as important in polishing language use and also suggests that instruction will be more successful whenever the child's language development

is taken into account.

Other interesting findings of research studies of formal and informal readiness programs suggest that highly structured programs appear to be quite effective with children from populations commonly termed disadvantaged. They also seem to be effective in reducing the gap in achievement which often appears between advantaged and disadvantaged children.

It is also important to note that the effectiveness of readiness programs is generally not fleeting. Studies which have examined the effects of readiness instruction, not only on readiness test results but also on reading achievement test results, indicate that children who have had effective readiness programs tend to experience greater first grade reading achievement than children who have not. For this initial achievement to continue, however, it is necessary that children continue to receive effective instruction throughout elementary grades.

To summarize, kindergarten experiences seem to have a very positive effect on reading readiness and later reading achievement. Moreover, both informal and formal reading readiness experiences appear to be effective. Current research, however, indicates that formal reading readiness instruction probably has greater advantages than informal readiness instruction.

How Effective is Formal Preschool Reading Instruction?

Recently, researchers and teachers have become interested in the possibility that actual reading instruction might be effective with preschool children. As a result, a great deal of research has been done in this area, and many schools are already offering actual reading instruction to preschool children. Research to date indicates that formal reading instruction has been successfully accomplished with preschool children.

How does formal reading instruction differ from formal reading readiness instruction? The answer is very little. In fact, formal reading instruction is simply an extension of formal readiness instruction. In other words, a carefully planned effort is made to teach the child to read words, sentences, paragraphs, stories, and books before he enters first grade.

As mentioned earlier, it appears that preschool children can learn to read earlier. In fact, almost every method used for preschool reading instruction seems to produce results. An important caution, however, has been noted by researchers. They warn that the learning of reading is highly individualized. Therefore, the child who is not interested in reading at the time of preschool instruction should not be forced into learning to read. Instead, he should be provided with readiness experiences that will enable him to be ready for reading instruction in first grade.

Another important caution for those interested in preschool reading instruction is that subsequent reading instruction in first grade must build upon it. Little purpose is served by teaching a child to read in kindergarten and then reteaching him the same reading skills in first grade. Parents should make sure that the elementary schools their children will attend are prepared to build upon the preschool reading instruction their children have been exposed to.

Finally, we would like to point out that simply because a child learns to read before first grade there is no guarantee that he will maintain his reading gains. Researchers have not done enough research in this area. The research that has been reported to date indicates that reading gains made by preschool children tend to "wash out" about third grade. More than likely, the "wash out" effect is produced by schools which fail to build on the child's early start in reading.

In sum, preschool children can be taught to read. The effectiveness of such instruction, however, is usually determined by how well the elementary school adjusts to the child's early start. Thus, before a parent allows his preschool child to be taught to read, he might visit the elementary school the child will attend and determine whether the school is ready to build upon the child's early start in reading.

Will Formal Preschool Reading Instruction Harm My Child?

Many parents wish to expose their preschool children to formal reading instruction. However, they are reluctant to do so because they are afraid that formal preschool reading instruction will in some way harm their children's social and emotional development or cause a dislike for reading during later school years.

In more cases than not, parents' concern stems from educators who warn that preschool reading instruction might result in children having emotional problems. Parents should know, however, that this warning is based on what many educators "believe" and not on what they know to be fact. There is no conclusive research evidence that indicates that formal preschool reading instruction causes emotional problems. Moreover, most research suggests that preschool children tend to enjoy formal reading instruction. More than likely, if a child does experience emotional problems, it is because he was pushed into learning to read when he had very little interest in it.

Formal preschool reading instruction has also been blamed for children's dislike for reading. If a child is forced to learn to read too soon or when he is not interested in reading, he might learn to dislike reading. On the other hand, if a child who is interested in reading is taught to read his early success may result in positive attitudes

toward reading. In fact, most researchers report that children who learn to read early view their reading ability as a step toward maturity and as a tool for learning.

In summary, it seems that early exposure to reading is not harmful to the child. More than likely, such exposure builds positive attitudes toward reading. As a result, it is very possible that formal preschool reading instruction might provide for better adjustment toward later school work.

Can Parents Help Schools That Have Preschool Reading Programs?

Most parents are aware of the expense involved in preschool instruction. Therefore, they are willing to donate their time in an attempt to help the schools.

Teacher aides have been used in schools across the country for a great many purposes. They have been instrumental in improving the effectiveness of many programs. In readiness programs, aides have been shown to have made significant contributions to children's readiness for reading.

Sometimes parents can act as teacher aides, either contributing time in classrooms or working with their children at home. They are just as effective as trained paraprofessionals as long as they participate willingly and fully in programs and as long as they receive sufficient feedback from the school.

Parents interested in improving children's readiness might volunteer their services to their children's teachers. If enough parents wish to become involved, programs can be organized which will provide structure for them and offer optimum learning situations for children.

What Kinds of Homes Produce Good Readers?

Parents fully realize the importance of reading ability. Therefore it is natural for them to ask the question: What can I do to help my preschool child become a good reader? The purpose of this section is to provide some answers to this question.

Characteristics of Homes Producing Early Readers. The first thing for the parent to know is that one of the most important factors affecting early reading development is the home situation in which children are brought up. The child who is surrounded by books, magazines, and newspapers is quite apt to become interested in the secrets they hold for the reader. Children whose parents read to them frequently are likely to want to learn to read for themselves. Similarly, children who frequently observe their parents reading come to view reading as a worthwhile activity.

The following questions are offered as a checklist for parents wishing to determine the degree to which their homes provide for the development of early reading. The majority of the questions should be answered, "yes".

1. Do I read aloud to my child?

2. Does my child have a story time almost every day?

3. Do I buy books for my child?

4. Do I have books for my child in the car?

5. Do I take my child to the public library?

6. Do I give books as presents to my child?

7. Does my child have a book shelf which belongs to him?

8. Do I take my child to the public library story hour regularly?

9. Does my child have a library card?

10. Does my child see both parents reading often?

11. Does my child subscribe to children's magazines or belong to children's book clubs?

12. Do I listen to my child read picture stories?

13. Do I listen when my child pretends to read?

14. Do I have a good reading list to help me choose books for my child?

15. Is there a special place for reading in my home?

Understanding Parents. The next thing for parents to know is that learning to read is not an easy task. The child needs a number of skills and attitudes in order to get meaning from printed words and to enjoy reading. One would not expect to learn to read a foreign language such as Russian in a few weeks. This is the same kind of task facing the preschool child as he begins to learn to read English.

In addition to being a difficult task, learning to read usually represents the first time the child will compete with other children his age on a task of known difficulty. For this reason, it is not unusual for parents to view reading as a measure of growing up. The sure thing about children, however, is that they are not all the same. Just as all children do not learn to talk on the same day, children do not learn to read the same day, the same week, or even the same month. This is also true of children in the same family.

The point to remember is this: All children differ greatly in which and how fast they will learn to read. Therefore, parents should not put pressure on their children for quick results. Likewise, they should not compare their child's reading performance to that of other children.

How Can I Help My Preschool Child Before He Learns to Read?

Before the child is ready to learn to read he must have a combination of skills and attitudes, and interests which will enable him to learn to read successfully. Among these skills, attitudes, and interests are the following:

1. Being able to see well
2. Being able to hear well
3. Being able to speak well
4. Having good language skills

5. Being able to follow directions
6. Having good emotional development
7. Having good social development
8. Having a good experiential background
9. Knowing how to handle books
10. Having an interest in reading

The purpose of this section is to provide parents with ideas and suggestions which they can use to help their children develop the above skills, attitudes and interests. As parents read this section, they should keep the following points about children and learning in mind:

1. Children should be taught that learning is fun. This should constantly be communicated by the parent to the child.

2. Each child is an individual. He deserves respect and needs love.

3. Since children learn a great deal by imitation, parents should converse with their children in the manner they wish their children to eventually communicate. If the parent wants the child to speak "baby talk," then he should use baby talk with him. But if he wants the child to learn to speak the way he speaks, then he should provide the child with many opportunities to listen to and use correct speech.

4. Children learn a great deal by asking questions. Never stifle the child's curiosity, but encourage his questioning. Provide him with simple but true answers, and whenever possible, tell him and show him answers to questions.

5. Provide the child with learning material that is meaningful to him. The child is much more apt to learn from those things that are interesting and important to him.

Children Need to See. Good eyesight is vital to learning to read. Children must be able to focus their eyes on letters, words, and lines of print. Children must also be able to see both likenesses and differences in pictures, objects, letters and words.

The process by which a child sees objects with his eyes is referred to as visual perception. The ability to differentiate objects, letters, etc., is called visual discrimination. A child who is learning to read must be able to make fine discriminations of very small differences among letters and words in order to recognize many words.

If a child is weak in this area, he might be observed rubbing his eyes, holding reading materials either very close or very far away from him, or squinting. Any deficiency in the area of vision makes learning to read very difficult for the child. Consequently, if the child exhibits any of the above symptoms, the child should have his eyes examined by a doctor.

The following are good activities for developing good eyesight or visual discrimination:

1. Tell the child, "I see something in this room," then describe it to him and have him try to guess what it is.

2. Any activities that require the child to distinguish colors are useful. For example, you might have your child sort buttons according to color. Or you might ask the child to find three things in the room that are green.

3. Let your child help you bake cookies. Allow him to help roll the dough or use cookie cutters in order to build his fine muscle coordination. Let him count the cookies, sort them out according to size, touch the cookies before and after baking (to build his experiential background).

4. Have the child point out to you (with your help) the differences in the shapes and sizes of the various pans in the kitchen. Have him find round and square pans, small and large pans, etc.

5. Encourage your child to collect things. If for instance, the child collects rocks, have him find a smooth rock, then a large rock, then other kinds of rocks. Also have him sort similar objects into piles of various sizes, shapes or colors.

6. Make your child his own jigsaw puzzle by pasting a picture on cardboard, cutting it up, and having him put it together.

7. Cut from construction paper various patterns (circles, squares, etc.). Then choose one of the patterns and ask the child to find one like it.

8. Playing with puzzles teaches children to see small likenesses and differences. Begin by allowing your child to play with puzzles having very big pieces. He can progress gradually to puzzles with small pieces.

9. Buy sets of blocks having many shapes and sizes. Ask your child to bring you blocks with different shapes. Ask him for the biggest or smallest blocks.

10. Draw simple pictures on a piece of paper. Ask your child to find missing parts (house--no door) (cat--no ears).

11. Ask your child to match colors, pictures, objects, etc.

12. Identify letters for him when he notices them on signs, packages, or television.

Remember to reward and praise your child when he performs these activities. A simple "very good Billy" will keep his interested, happy, and willing to continue with exercises that will benefit him later on. Never berate the child for poor performance; continue to encourage him and always choose tasks he can do. If there are tasks that he cannot perform, save them for a later time.

Children Need to Hear. Distinguishing sounds is also necessary to learning to read. For example, children should be able to recognize familiar sounds such as running water or tapping. It is also important that the child be able to hear differences between sounds which occur at the beginning and end of words such as bat, rat, can, and cat.

We call the ability to recognize differences and similarities in sounds auditory discrimination. Many children can hear very well, but are still low in auditory discrimination. In reading, the child must be able to hear the sounds of letters, letter combinations, and words clearly. If a child has good auditory acuity he is able to differentiate between high and low pitches and between sounds that are near or far away.

If a child is high in auditory sequencing, he is able to recall a given order of individual sounds. Auditory analyzing involves the ability to differentiate between beginning, middle, and ending sounds. The child's auditory memory is important in recalling material he hears. In reading, the child must be able to remember a sound well enough to reproduce it in relation to printed letters and words.

If the child has an auditory problem, he might be observed to be unable to follow spoken directions, reproduce speech sounds adequately, to hear a whispered voice a few inches away. If a child exhibits any of these symptoms, his hearing should be checked by a doctor.

The following are good activities for developing the ability to hear:

1. Have the child identify rhyming words for a familiar story you have told him.

2. By clapping your hands and tapping on the table, ask the child to repeat a sequence of sound you have made. Then vary the sequence or rhythm and have the child imitate it.

3. Describe a sound that is familiar to the child, or imitate it yourself, and have him identify the sound. (Use animals, cars, etc.).

4. When several of the child's friends or family members are present blindfold him and have him identify the person speaking. Then, have him point to where the speaker is.

5. Sing notes or play them on a musical instrument and have the child sing the same notes.

6. Say to the child three words that all begin with the same letter or end with the same letter. Then have him tell how the words are alike. Ask him to think of other words that begin or end with the same sound.

7. Have your child turn his head. Close the door, turn the water on, move a chair, or set something in a bowl. Ask him what you did.

8. Imitate the sounds of a machine or an animal (train, cow, etc.). Ask your child to guess what makes the sound.

9. Read rhymes that repeat sounds to your child (Hickory, Dickory, Dock).

10. Play games in which he listens for words that begin alike. For example, he claps his hands for every word

that begins like rat, but does not clap when words begin differently.

11. Have him look for pictures of things that begin with the same sound.

Children Need to Speak Well. In order to learn to read, children need to speak plainly. They also need to speak in complete sentences. If the child can hear sounds clearly, it will aid his speech development. The inability to reproduce or articulate speech sounds is commonly associated with reading disability.

Children learn to speak by copying their parents. Therefore, parents should always speak clearly and carefully themselves so that the child will hear correct pronunciation. Speak to your child in grown-up language. Encourage him to speak plainly. If he mumbles, ask him to speak more clearly. Never encourage baby talk.

The following are good activities to develop speaking ability:

1. If a tape recorder is available, record your child while he is talking, then let him hear what he has said. Record other members of the family saying the same thing and let the child hear this. Ask your child to tell which family member is speaking when he listens to the tape recorder.

2. Have your child pronounce a word you have just pronounced. If he has trouble with the word, practice it this way for awhile. Then have him say the word, and you

repeat it for him. This will help him hear the difference between words he mispronounces and the correct way to pronounce them.

3. If the child is having trouble pronouncing particular words, make a game out of pronouncing them and play it with the child.

Children Need Language Skills. Children must know the meanings of many common words such as car, box, house, city, etc. It is important that they are able to use common words in complete sentences.

The following are good activities for language development:

1. One of the best ways to develop your child's language skills is through the use of bright colored pictures. Present your child with a picture. Ask him what he sees. Ask him to tell you what is happening in the picture.

2. In addition to the above activity, you should take your child on trips to the park, the airport, etc. Tell him the names of animals, cars, flowers, etc.

3. Help the child make up rhymes and act them out.

4. Talk to your child often in groups or alone; he will know that you think of him as a person.

5. Use puppets in talking with your child. Have him be the voice of a puppet and talk to you.

6. Read to the child. After you finish a particular story, have him retell the story to you. Help him with

unfamiliar words.

Children Need to be Able to Follow Directions and Pay Attention. Children learn to read with groups of children. Therefore, they must be able to listen to directions. They must also be able to keep directions in mind over a short period of time or to recall them after a long period of time. It is also necessary that they be able to sit quietly, hold a book, and focus their attention on specific reading tasks.

The best way to help your child learn to follow directions is by giving him simple directions to follow. Try to make a game out of it. For example, ask him to pick a ball up, bounce it, and put it on a chair. You might also give him little jobs to do. You should make sure he does the jobs in the order given.

You can also play "restaurant" with your child. First, cut out pictures of food from magazines. Sit at a table and let your child play the waiter. Give him your order. He repeats the names of what you order and brings the pictures to you.

Children Need Good Emotional Development. Children need adequate emotional development in order that changes in daily routines will not upset them. They need to face new tasks daily without being afraid of failure. It is also important that they be able to follow adult leadership in learning to read. Children must also be able to exert self

control in waiting their turn. Most important, children need to be able to accept defeat in learning some reading skills and show confidence as they try again to learn them.

The following activities are suggested for emotional development:

1. Let the child act out spontaneous dramatizations of various situations. In a "just pretend" situation, many fears the child might have will be revealed. The child is also able to do things in a pretend situation he could not do otherwise.

2. With your child, act out the ways people feel when they are sad, happy, tired, excited, etc. Emphasize that emotions are in all of us, but sometimes we must control how we feel so that we can get along with others.

3. Always tell the child the truth in a simple, pleasurable way.

Children Need Social Development. Children need adequate social development in order to:

1. Work well in a group and take their share of the responsibility.

2. Cooperate with other children in games.

3. Concentrate on one thing for a period of time.

4. Develop the skill of listening without interrupting.

5. Offer help to other children when they need it.

6. Share their materials with other children.

7. Wait for their turn in work and play activities.

8. Work out their own solutions to problems without the help of others.

9. Take care of their own materials.

10. Find things to work on by themselves.

11. Go places by themselves without supervision.

12. Know and be able to tell others their names, addresses, and phone numbers.

13. Carry out daily responsibilities without being reminded.

The following are good activities for social development.

1. Discuss and praise the child's work. Make a display rack on which his finished pictures and other works can be placed.

2. Have your child help you sort clothes by color. Make a game out of trying to tell which clothes belong to which members of the family. Have him help you fold clothes. Give him oral directions, and guide him in carrying out the directions.

3. Let your child help you prepare meals and set the table.

4. Discuss the reasons for washing hands before eating, brushing teeth every day, etc. with your child. Often, if he knows the reasons for such tasks, he will perform them more willingly.

5. Let the child pretend he is helping you shop. Let him use merchandise catalogues in selecting purchases for each member of the family. Have him pick out particular pieces of furniture for specific rooms in the house, etc.

Children Need Good Experiential Backgrounds. Children must have experiences on which to base language. Without these experiences, they will simply learn to "parrot" or say words. Reading is more than recognizing words in print. It is reconstructing facts, experiences, and ideas behind words. Trips to unfamiliar places or seeing movies about these places are excellent ways to broaden the child's experience.

The following activities are suggested for developing experiential background:

1. Let your child remove the clothes from the dryer and name the different items.

2. Let him taste the difference between salt and sugar, then expand this knowledge of differences in things to other items.

3. Take your child on trips often. Take him to the zoo. Discuss the animals at the zoo and any questions the child might have. Then involve the child in an activity later on like drawing a picture of an elephant, or acting as if he were an elephant.

4. Make out of cardboard or an old sheet a silhouette of your child. Discuss the various body parts, then clothes

that can be worn.

5. Let the child feel the temperature of one of his favorite drinks (like milk). Put a cup of milk in the refrigerator and take it out later and let him feel the temperature again. Leave a glass of milk out and let him see what happens to it.

6. Give your child riddles to try to figure out. Let him act out the answer to some of the riddles.

7. Blindfold your child and give him two objects. Then have him tell you if they are the same or different. Have him explain how they are alike or different. Later, have him try to identify objects while he is blindfolded.

8. Take your child to the grocery store with you. Point out things like coconuts or avocados that he might not otherwise come in contact with. When you get back, let him help you put the groceries away. Discuss with your child where various grocery items come from (hamburger from cows; oranges from Florida).

9. Have your child help you with yardwork. Point out various kinds of plants and flowers.

10. Take your child to familiar places like the library, post office, and restaurants. Explain what these places are, and what goes on there.

Children Need to Know How to Handle Books. In order to learn how to handle books, children must have direct experience with them. Therefore, parents should let them pick a book and tell the story they want to read. Children

should also turn the pages as parents read to them. Another good idea is to allow children to point to pictures in the book as they are being read to. After reading to children, parents should provide time for a discussion of what has been read.

The parent should also learn the following things about books:

1. A book is something to read
2. How to hold a book in the proper position for reading
3. Where the title of a book is
4. Where the front of a book is
5. Where the back of a book is
6. Where the top of a book is
7. Where the bottom of a book is
8. To read words in horizontal rows from left to right
9. The picture that goes with what is being read

Children Need to be Interested in Reading. The desire to read is very important if children are going to learn to read. The desire to read has its beginning in the home. Children who have reading experiences in the home are usually anxious to learn to read.

The following are a number of activities which will stimulate interest and desire in learning to read:

1. Read aloud to your child and discuss the story with him.

2. Develop an atmosphere for reading by letting your child see you read.

3. Buy books for your child.

4. Even before he enters first grade, take your child to the library.

5. Let your child watch Sesame Street. Sesame Street is the TV show planned for children at home who are too young to go to school. This one hour program can usually be seen Monday through Friday on your local Educational Television Channel. Sesame Street is great fun for preschool children. Stories, games and cartoons are used to teach children many things they will need to know when they enter first grade. For example, your child can learn the alphabet, numbers, and many new words.

What Books Should My Preschool Child Read?

Interests are very important in selecting books for young children because they often have long-lasting effects. Young children who have had pleasant experiences looking at their own picture books, listening to stories, and sharing their ideas will likely develop a love for books, the desire to read, an appreciation of good literature, and an awareness that books can provide fun and information. As they grow older, they will seek new ideas and experiences through reading, and you as a parent can help them then and now by

providing carefully selected books that offer a wide variety of type and content. These will include books of poetry, nonsense rhymes, stories about everyday experiences, nature, holidays, heroes, and factual information. They will provide opportunities for your child to learn about beauty and nature; to develop tolerance, and an understanding of himself and others; to be imaginative and creative; to be challenged and broadened; and to be filled with personal satisfaction and pleasure.

Different Age Groups Like Different Books. Children of different ages like different books. You should try to find books that appeal to your child's interests. Such books are easy to find when you remember certain characteristics about preschoolers.

Two- and three-year-olds enjoy stories which contain realistic experiences; they do not yet possess enough background to deal with abstractions or gross exaggerations such as that found in Millions of Cats. They also love repetition, riddles, jungles, and short stories with large colorful pictures that they can easily identify.

Four- and five-year-olds are beginning to distinguish between fact and fancy, and they love exaggeration. They are interested in new words and delight in humorous books. They will still enjoy certain treasured favorites, but their attention will focus on books and stories which are more sophisticated.

But whether they are two or five years old, children like illustrations; they delight in "reading" the pictures. They find much enjoyment and learning in realistic pictures which depict happenings in the story or which show a world beyond their own experiences. And there is a very special thrill for five- and six-year-olds who can stretch their imaginations through pictures that enable them to pretend.

Selecting a Book. When selecting a book for your preschooler, keep the following questions in mind.

1. Is the book pleasant?
2. Is the plot simple?
3. Does the plot move along at a nice pace?
4. Does the book contain characters which are familiar to your child?
5. Are most of the words, ideas, and concepts understandable to the child?
6. Is the length appropriate?
7. Does the book teach desirable attitudes?
8. Are the illustrations appropriate for the child? Do they fit the content, mood, and plot of the story? Are they large and colorful, with plenty of action?
9. Is the binding durable?

The books presented in Appendix A meet the above criteria and are offered as a starting point in your selection of books for your child.

WARNING!

If you are a parent who tends to worry about your child's ability to learn to read, leave reading to the kindergartens and schools in your community. It is possible that your child will feel your concern and reflect your tenseness. In other words, your attitude can be a handicap for your child as he learns to read. Trust him. Encourage him. Show an interest in him. Love him. He will learn to read.

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APPENDIX A

A SELECTED BOOK LIST FOR PRESCHOOLERS

A Selected Book List for Preschoolers

For the infant to about age three:

Hallmark Pop-up Books for ages one to four as follows:

A Day on the Farm

Great Dinosaurs

The Limerick Zoo

What Should You Do When a Whale Sneezes?

A Number of Bears (counting book)

The Animals' ABC's

Mother Goose

Wheels That Work

Other Hallmark books for one- and two-year-olds

The Little Boy Story (age two through four)

The Little Girl Story by Dean Walley (age two through four)

The Magic of Growing Up by Dean Walley (age two through four)

One, Two, Three Learning to Count (age one through four)

Puck's Peculiar Pet Shop by Dean Walley (sounds and rhymes)

There's Only One You by Dean Walley

What Boys Can Be by Dean Walley

What Daddies Do by Eileen Rosenbaum

Adams, George and Henning, Paul. First Things. (New York: Platt and Munk) For infants.

Baby Animals and Baby Farm Animals. (New York: Golden Press) For ages two through four.

Baby's First Book. (New York: Platt and Munk) For infants; hard cardboard or cloth.

Brown, Margaret Wise. A Child's Goodnight Book. (New York: William R. Scott) For infants.

Brown, Margaret Wise. Goodnight Moon. (New York: Harper and Row) For infants.

Bruna, Dick. First Pictures. (Made in Western Germany)

Doing Their Thing. (Renewal Products) Cardboard pages; for eight months to age three.

Federico, Helen. Happy Book of ABC. (New York: Western Publishing) Cardboard pages; for ages one to three.

Flourig, Olivia. Our Neighborhood Friends. (New York: McGraw-Hill) Cardboard pages; for ages two to six.

Gay, Zhenya. Golden Block Books. (New York: Western Publishing) A set of four sturdy, block-shaped cardboard books for infants.

Gay, Zhenya. Look! (New York: Viking Press) For ages one to four.

Kunhardt, Dorothy. Pat the Bunny. (New York: Western Publishing) For infants.

Matthiesen, Thomas. ABC, An Alphabet Book. (New York: Platt and Munk) Uses beautiful full-page colored photographs appropriate for infants to teach simple concepts. For age nine months to four years.

Matthiesen, Thomas. Things to See. (New York: Platt and Munk) For infants.

My First Toys. (New York: Platt and Munk) For infants.

Rey, H. A. Anybody at Home? (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin) For infants.

Risom, Ole. I Am a Puppy. (New York: Golden Press) Cardboard pages; for one- to three-year-olds.

Rosenbaum, Eileen and Seymour, Peter. The Goodnight Book. (Kansas City: Hallmark Cards) Cardboard pages; for infants.

Salisbury, Kent. Funny Fingers. (New York: Webster Publishing) Large cardboard pages; for ages six months to eight months.

Scarry, Patsy. My Teddy Bear Book. (New York: Golden Press) For ages one to three.

Scarry, Richard. Best Word Book Ever. (New York: Western Publishing) For infants.

Seuss, Dr. The Cat in the Hat Beginner Book Dictionary. (New York: Random House) For infants.

Steiner, Charlotte. My Bunny Feels Soft. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf) For ages one to four.

The Tall Book of Mother Goose. (New York: Harper and Row)

Tensen, Ruth M. Come to the Farm. (Chicago: The Reilly and Lee Company) A farm-animal picture book.

Things to See. (New York: Platt and Munk) Full-page beautiful but simple objects to name; for one- to three-year-olds.

Walley, Dean. Pet Parade. (Kansas City: Hallmark Cards) Cardboard pages; for infants.

Walley, Dean and Cunningham, Edward. Zoo Parade. (Kansas City: Hallmark Cards) Beautiful cardboard pages; for ages one through three.

What Do You See? (Chicago: The Hampton Publishing Company) Lovely cloth, colored pictures; for age six months.

Wilde, Irma. Farm Animals. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap) For infants.

Williams, Garth. Baby Animals. (New York: Western Publishing) For ages one to three.

Williams, Garth. Baby's First Book. (New York: Western Publishing) For infants.

Witte, Pat and Witte, Eve. The Touch Me Book. (New York: Western Publishing) For infants.

Witte, Pat and Witte, Eve. Who Lives Here? (New York: Western Publishing) For infants.

Zaffo, George. The Giant Nursery Book of Things that Go. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday) For infants.

For the three- to six-year-old.

Aldis, Dorothy. Dumb Stupid David. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1965) Delightful story of a baby brother who wasn't so dumb after all.

Alexander, Martha. The Story Grandmother Told. (New York: The Dial Press, 1969)

Alexander, Martha. We Never Get to Do Anything. (New York: The Dial Press, 1970) Excellent for children who use the title words on Mother.

Balian, Lorna. I Love You, Mary Jane. (Nashville, Abington Press, 1967) Story of a birthday party.

Bartlett, Margaret Farrington. The Clean Brook. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1960) Beautiful illustrations for a simple ecology theme.

Bemelmans, Ludwig. Madeline. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954) For ages four through six.

Brown, Margaret Wise. The Dead Bird. (New York: William R. Scott, 1958)

Brown, Margaret Wise. The Little Brass Band. (New York: Harper and Row, 1955)

Brown, Margaret Wise. The Run Away Bunny. (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1954) For ages three through five.

Brown, Margaret Wise. SHHhhh. . . . .BANG. (New York: Harper and Row, 1943) For ages three through five.

Brown, Margaret Wise. The Sleepy Little Lion. (New York: Harper and Row, 1947) For ages three through five.

Brown, Myra Berry. Pip Camps Out. (San Carlos: Golden Gate Junior Books, 1966)

Buckley, Helen. Grandfather and I. (New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1959)

Budney, Blossom. A Kiss is Round. (New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1954)

Carrick, Carol and Carrick, Donald. Swamp Spring. (New York: Macmillan, 1969) Has a simple ecology theme.

Carton, Lonnie. Mommies. (New York: Random House, 1960)

Cohen, Miriam. Will I Have a Friend? (New York: Macmillan, 1967) The Story of a boy's first day in kindergarten.

Cole, William. What's Good for a Five-Year-Old? (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969)

Comfort, Mildred. Moving Day. (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1958) For ages four through six.

Cooper, Elizabeth K. and Krush, Beth and Krush, Joe. The Fish from Japan. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1969)

Dalgiesh, Alice. The Thanksgiving Story. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1949)

De Angeli, Marguerite. Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1954)

Duvoisin, Roger. Spring Snow. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963) For ages two and one-half to five.

Eichenberg, Fritz. Ape in a Cape. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1952) A rhyming alphabet picture book.

Ets, Marie Hall. Play with Me. (New York: Viking Press, 1955) For ages three through five.

Fatio, Louise. The Happy Lion. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954)

Fisher, Aileen. Clean as a Whistle. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1969) In delightful verse form, teaches children who hate to take a bath that even the animals keep clean.

Fisher, Aileen. Going Barefoot. (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1960) This book describes the seasons in verse form with good pictures.

Fisher, Aileen. Where Does Everyone Go? (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1961)

Flack, Marjorie. The Story About Ping. (New York: Viking Press, 1933) This book is about a duck who tries to avoid a spanking.

Freeman, Don. Add a Line. (Los Angeles: Anderson, Ritchie and Simon, 1968) This is an alphabet picture book; for ages three through five.

Freeman, Ira and Morrison, Sean. Water, Where It Comes From and Where It Goes. (Singapore: Random House, n.d.)

Gay, Zhenya. What's Your Name? (New York: Viking Press, 1955)

Goldone, Paul. The Monkey and the Crocodile. (New York: Seabury Press, 1969)

Graham, Al. Timothy Turtle. (New York: Viking Press, 1946)

Graham, Margaret Bloy. Be Nice to Spiders. (New York: Harper and Row, 1967)

Green, Mary McBurney. Everybody Has a House and Everybody Eats. (New York: William R. Scott, n.d.)

Hawkinson, John and Hawkinson, Lucy. Days I Like. (Chicago: Albert Whitman and Company, 1965) For ages three to six.

Hengesbaugh, Jane. I Live in So Many Places. (Chicago: Children's Press, 1956)

Heyword, Du Bose. The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1939) For ages four to six.

Hoban, Russell. A Bargain for Frances. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970) An I Can Read Book.

Hoban, Russell. A Baby Sister for Frances. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964)

Hoban, Russell. Bedtime for Frances. (New York: Harper and Row, 1960)

Hoban, Russell. Herman the Loser. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) For ages five and six.

Hoban, Russell. The Sorely Trying Day. (New York: Harper and Row, 1964)

Hobson, Laura Z. I'm Going to Have a Baby. (New York: John Day, 1967)

Horvath, Betty. Hooray for Jasper. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1966)

Horvath, Betty. Jasper Makes Music. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1967)

Hutchins, Pat. Rosie's Walk. (New York: Macmillan, 1968)

Hutchins, Pat. The Surprise Party. (New York: Macmillan, 1969)

Iwasaki, Chihiro. Staying Home Alone on a Rainy Day. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968) Excellent story to dispel fear of being alone.

Jardine, Maggie. I Need. (New York: Wonder Books, 1965) For ages three through five.

Johnson, Crockett. Harold and the Purple Crayon. (New York: Harper and Row, 1955) Promotes self-confidence.

Johnson, Crockett. Who's Upside Down? (New York: William R. Scott, 1952) For ages four and five.

Joslin, Sesyle. Brave Baby Elephant. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1960)

Joslin, Sesyle. What Do You Say Dear? (New York: William R. Scott, 1958) For ages four to six.

Keats, Jack Ezra. The Snowy Day. (New York: Viking Press, 1962)

Krasilovsky, Phyllis. The Very Little Girl. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1953)

Krauss, Ruth. The Carrot Seed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1945)

Krauss, Ruth. The Growing Story. (New York: Harper and Row, 1947)

La Fontaine. The Miller, the Boy and the Donkey. (New York: Franklin Watts, 1969)

Lambert, Saul. Mrs. Poggi's Holiday. (New York: Random House, 1969) Describes what a holiday is and how it is often celebrated.

Langstaff, John. Frog Went a-Courtin'. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1955) Illustrations are outstanding. For ages two and one-half to six.

Langstaff, John. Over in the Meadow. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1957) For ages three through five.

Lawson, Robert. Rabbit Hill. (New York: Macmillan, 1963) A Newberry winner.

Lenski, Lois. Big Little Davy. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1956)

Lenski, Lois. I Like Winter. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1950)

Lenski, Lois. The Little Train. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1940)

Lenski, Lois. Now It's Fall. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1948)

Lenski, Lois. On a Summer Day. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1953)

Lenski, Lois. Papa Small. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1966)

Lenski, Lois. Policeman Small. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1962)

Lenski, Lois. Spring Is Here. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1945)

Lenski, Lois. When I Grow Up. (New York: Henry Z. Walck, 1960)

Lionni, Leo. Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse. (New York: Random House, 1969)

Lonergan, Joy. Brian's Secret Errand. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969)

Longman, Harold. The Kitchen-Window Squirrel. (New York: Parents' Magazine Press, 1969)

May, Julian. The Big Island. (Chicago: Follett, 1968) Simply written; shows the need for balance in nature.

Mayer, Mercer. Frog, Where Are You? (New York: The Dial Press, 1969) A small book with no words; pictures tell this lively story.

McCloskey, Robert. One Morning in Maine. (New York: Viking Press, 1952)

Miles, Miska. Apricot ABC. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969) In verse form, the story of a discarded apricot seed. The ecology theme carries the story far beyond the typical ABC audience.

Miles, Miska. Nobody's Cat. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969)

Moore, Clement C. The Night Before Christmas. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1949)

Oberhänsli, Trudi. Sleep, Baby Sleep. (New York: Atheneum, 1967)

Ormondroyd, Edward. Theodore. (Berkeley, California: Parnassus Press, 1966)

Peggy Cloth Books. The Baby Animal Dress-Up Book. (New York: Platt and Munk, n.d.) Teaches how to use a buckle, belt, button, bow, zipper, snap, and shoelace; for ages three to four.

Petersham, Maud and Petersham, Miska. The Christ Child. (New York: Doubleday, 1931) For ages four to nine.

Piper, Watty. The Little Engine that Could. (New York: Platt and Munk, 1954)

Preston, Edna Mitchell. Pop Corn and Ma Goodness. (New York: Viking Press, 1969)

Preston, Edna Mitchell. The Temper Tantrum Book. (New York: Viking Press, 1969) Helps children who have tantrums to see themselves as others see them.

Provenson, Alice and Provenson, Martin. What Is a Color? (New York: Golden Press, 1968) Large picture book explaining color; for ages three and four.

Raskin, Ellen. And It Rained. (New York: Atheneum, 1969)

Raskin, Ellen. Spectacles. (New York: Atheneum, 1969)

Reiss, John J. Colors. (Englewood Cliffs: Bradbury Press, 1969) For ages three and four.

Rey, Hans A. Where's My Baby? (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1956)

Rey, Hans A. Curious George. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1941) For Ages four to six.

Robinson, Tom. Buttons. (New York: Viking Press, 1938)

Rogers, Mary. The Rotten Book. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969)

Scarry, Patsy. My Baby Brother. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956)

Scarry, Richard. Best Mother Goose Ever. (New York: Western Publishing, 1964) A Giant Golden Book; for ages four to six.

Schatz, Letta. When Will My Birthday Be? (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962) For ages three through five.

Schick, Eleanor. City in the Summer. (New York: Macmillan, n.d.)

Schick, Eleanor. City in the Winter. (New York: Macmillan, 1970)

Schlein, Miriam. My Family. (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1960)

Schlein, Miriam and Kessler, Leonard. Heavy is a Hippopotamus. (New York: William R. Scott, 1954)

Schlein, Miriam. The Best Place. (Chicago: Albert Whitman and Company, 1967) For ages three through five.

Schlein, Miriam. Shapes. (Eau Claire: E. M. Hale and Company, 1952) For ages three through five.

Schwartz, Julius. Now I Know. (New York: Whittlesey House, 1955) For ages four and five.

Scott, Elissa. I See Something Red. (Kansas City: Hallmark Cards, n.d.)

Segal, Lore. Tell Me a Mitzi. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970)

Sendak, Maurice. A Very Special House. (New York: Harper and Row, 1953)

Sendak, Maurice. Where the Wild Things Are. (New York: Harper and Row, 1963) For ages four to six.

Seuss, Dr. And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street. (New York: Vanguard Press, 1937)

Seuss, Dr. Bartholomew and the Oobleck. (New York: Random House, 1949)

Seuss, Dr. The Cat in the Hat. (New York: Random House, 1957)

Seuss, Dr. The Cat in the Hat Comes Back. (New York: Random House, 1958)

Seuss, Dr. Dr. Seuss's ABC. (New York: Random House, 1963)

Seuss, Dr. Horton Hatches the Egg. (New York: Random House, 1940)

Seuss, Dr. Horton Hears a Who. (New York: Random House, 1954)

Seuss, Dr. If I Ran the Circus. (New York: Random House, 1956)

Seuss, Dr. If I Ran the Zoo. (New York: Random House, 1950)

Seuss, Dr. Thidwick the Big Hearted Moose. (New York: Random House, 1948)

Seuss, Dr. Yertle, the Turtle and Other Stories. (New York: Random House, 1958)

Seuss, Dr. and McKie, Roy. My Book About Me: By Me, Myself. (New York: Random House, 1969) This book is marvelous to develop self-image.

Sever, Josephine A. Johnny Goes to the Hospital. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1953)

Sharmat, Marjorie. Goodnight, Andrew, Goodnight, Craig. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969)

Shulevitz, Uri. Rain Rain Rivers. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969)

Slobodkin, Louis. Millions and Millions. (New York: Vanguard Press, 1955) For ages three through five.

Slobodkina, Esphyr. Caps for Sale. (New York: W. R. Scott, 1957)

Smith, William Jay. Laughing Time. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1955) For ages four to six.

Steig, William. Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. (New York: Windmill Books/Simon and Schuster, 1969)

Steiner, Charlotte. Kiki Loves Music. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1954)

Steptoe, John. Stevie. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969)

Tensen, Ruth M. Come to the Zoo. (Chicago: The Reilly and Lee Company, 1948) This is an alphabet picture book.

Thaler, Mike. Magic Boy. (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) For ages five and six.

Thayer, Jane. The Pussy Who Went to the Moon. (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1960) For ages four to six.

Thompson, Jean McKee. Poems to Grow On. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957)

Tresselt, Alvin. The Beaver Pond. (New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1970)

Tresselt, Alvin. It's Time Now. (New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1969)

Turkle, Brinton. Obadiah, the Bold. (New York: Viking Press, 1965)

Turlay, Clare. Marshmallow. (New York: Harper and Row, 1942) Has beautiful pictures.

Udry, Janice May. Let's Be Enemies. (New York: Harper and Row, 1961) This book is about friendship and is for ages four to six.

Walley, Dean. What Girls Can Be. (Kansas City: Hallmark Cards, n.d.) For ages three through five.

Watts, Mabel. My Father Can Fix Anything. (Racine, Wisconsin: Whitman Publishing Co., 1965)

Yashima, Mitsu and Yashima, Taro. Momo's Kitten. (New York: Viking Press, 1961)

Yashima, Taro. Umbrella. (New York: Viking Press, 1958)

Zaffo, George J. The Big Book of Boats and Ships. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1951)

Zaffo, George J. The Big Book of Fire Engines. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964)

Zaffo, George J. The Big Book of Real Building and Wrecking Machines. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1965)

Zion, Gene. Harry by the Sea. (New York: Harper and Row, 1965)

Zolotow, Charlotte. Big Sister and Little Sister. (New York: Harper and Row, 1966) For ages four and five.

Zolotow, Charlotte. The Bunny Who Found Easter. (Berkeley, California: Parnassus Press, 1959)

Zolotow, Charlotte. Over and Over. (New York: Harper and Row, 1957)

Zolotow, Charlotte. Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962)

Zolotow, Charlotte. My Friend John. (New York: Harper and Row, 1968)

Zolotow, Charlotte. The Quarreling Book. (New York: Harper and Row, 1963)

Zolotow, Charlotte. The Storm Book. (New York: Harper and Row, 1952)